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Tourism, Culture and Recreation
Innovation, Trade and Rural Development
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East Coast Trail Receives More Than $728,000 in Provincial Support for Extension and Maintenance

The East Coast Trail Association (ECTA) has received a commitment of more than $728,000 from the Provincial Government to extend its internationally-recognized trail network by 34 kilometres, and for ongoing maintenance of the 540-kilometre trail system over the next five years.

The Honourable Clyde Jackman, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, was on the Blackhead to Fort Amherst section of the trail today to announce, on behalf of the Provincial Government, that both the Departments of Tourism Culture and Recreation and Innovation, Trade and Rural Development are contributing to the development of the East Coast Trail.

The trail network, which has been featured as one of 10 secluded trails to visit by CNN.com, will receive $500,000 over the next five years for ongoing structural repairs and maintenance from the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation.

"The East Coast Trail is among this province's premier tourist attractions, and has become a travel generator for the province," said Minister Jackman. "Support for the trail is consistent with the province's efforts to extend the traditional tourism season – as hiking is an activity which continues well into the fall – and also supports our efforts to promote a healthy, active lifestyle among our resident population."

Minister Jackman noted the development of the East Coast Trail has been consumer-driven, well-planned, well-managed, and has led to the creation of business opportunities in terms of accommodations, food services and packaged tours.

The Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development is providing $228,324 to complete the extension of the trail network from Pouch Cove to Flatrock, and to undertake planning to extend it further to Logy Bay. The funding will help facilitate trail design, upgrading, installation of signage, along with construction of pedestrian bridges and two parking lots.

"The East Coast Trail Association is a model of success for not-for-profit groups," said the Honourable Trevor Taylor, Minister of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development. "It has successfully formed solid public-private partnerships, and this collaborative approach – coupled with the tireless work of its volunteers – has resulted in a world-class hiking trail network that is enjoyed by residents and visitors alike."

Kevin Parsons, MHA for the District of Cape St. Francis, welcomed the extension of the trail network in that region.

"The extension of the trail will generate more economic activity in the area as hiking enthusiasts from throughout the province, the country, and the world are drawn to the region," said Mr. Parsons. "As the opportunity to attract more users increases, so too does required services and amenities, such as accommodations and transportation to trail heads."

Formed in 1994, the ECTA is a volunteer, membership-based registered charity focused on developing, maintaining, and marketing the trail network. Its goal is to complete the trail network along the coastline from Topsail Beach to Trepassey, and inland across the Avalon Peninsula to Placentia.

"The East Coast Trail is a provincial and national treasure," said Randy Murphy, president of the

ECTA. "It offers a unique and appealing destination, outstanding natural beauty, wildlife, history, culture and geology. We have a coastline that is second to none in the world."

Funding for the trail extension is provided through the Provincial Government's Regional/Sectoral Diversification Fund (RSDF). RSDF is a $5-million fund that provides non-repayable contributions to economic development agencies for initiatives that address regional and sectoral development and diversification.

For more information on the East Coast Trail, visit: www.eastcoasttrail.com.

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